

# Dietary Irritants of the Urinary Bladder

Many foods and drinks can irritate the bladder. An irritated bladder often signals the need to be emptied more frequently. There is no specific diet that can cure bladder control problems, but there are dietary suggestions to help you manage the problem.

## Why eliminate certain foods or drinks?

If the food or drinks you take in are affecting bladder symptoms, removing those items from your diet can bring significant relief within 10 days. You will be able to check your body's response by going back to your old dietary habits and you will likely see bladder symptoms return.

## Foods that irritate the bladder

The following is a list of some foods and drinks that can affect bladder leakage and irritability. Removing these foods or drinks from your diet may improve your bladder control. If you cannot completely eliminate these items, we recommend you use them in moderation.

Common bladder irritants are:

- Coffee or tea
- Caffeinated drinks, foods or medications
- Soda or carbonated drinks
- Alcoholic drinks
- Artificial sweeteners (NutraSweet)

Other irritants include:

- Citrus fruits and juices
- Acidic foods (tomato-based products, vinegar)
- Spicy foods

## Foods that do not irritate the bladder

- Low-acid fruits (pears, apricots, papaya, watermelon)
- KAVA, Postum, Pero, Kaffree Roma instead of coffee
- Non-citrus herbal or sun-brewed teas

## Water is best

Water should be the majority of what you drink every day. People with bladder problems often reduce their fluid intake hoping that the need to urinate will be less frequent or that urinary leakage will be less. As a result, the urine becomes more concentrated and can actually cause you to void more frequently. The more highly concentrated urine acts as an irritant to the bladder surface, giving you the urge to void.

- Drink 6 to 8 eight-ounce glasses of fluids throughout the day, with  $\frac{2}{3}$  of fluid intake being water.
- Caffeinated drinks do not count toward your daily fluid intake of 48 to 64 ounces because they dehydrate the body.

